

Green Revolution

Volume 5 | Issue 4

Article 5

4-1-1967

Mortgages, Machines and Other Problems of Self-Sufficient Farming - Part II

John Seymour

Follow this and additional works at: <https://research.library.kutztown.edu/greenrevolution>



Part of the [Home Economics Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Seymour, John (1967) "Mortgages, Machines and Other Problems of Self-Sufficient Farming - Part II," *Green Revolution*: Vol. 5 : Iss. 4 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://research.library.kutztown.edu/greenrevolution/vol5/iss4/5>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Research Commons at Kutztown University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Green Revolution by an authorized editor of Research Commons at Kutztown University. For more information, please contact czerny@kutztown.edu.

THE GREEN

FOR HOMESTEADERS, ON-TO-THE-LANDERS,
AND DO-IT-YOURSELVERS



REVOLUTION

SCHOOL OF LIVING, BROOKVILLE, OHIO 45309
PUBLISHED MONTHLY. MAILED AT FREELAND, MD. 21053

Volume 5, Number 4

April, 1967

25c per copy, \$3 per year

A. P. Thompson in April Seminar On Earthworms and Gardening

The weekend of April 22 and 23, at the Heathcote School of Living Center, Freeland, Md., is a special occasion for homesteaders, gardeners and farmers (or any who want to become such). A weekend seminar, with A. P. Thompson as the leader and demonstrator, will deal with earthworm culture and soil analysis. Mr. Thompson, in 25 years, has developed the famous, disease-free Golden Acres Orchards at Front Royal, Va. He will help seminar attendants observe and understand the soil at Heathcote, know better what to do in the months ahead to produce a good garden in terms of soil and climate demands.

Attendants from a distance should arrive Friday evening (\$1 additional for lodging and breakfast). By car go to Maryland Line Exit on Route 83; by Greyhound bus (Harrisburg to Washington, D.C. run) go to Maryland Line Firehouse stop. Send \$2 registration for the weekend to Director, Heathcote Center, Freeland, Md. Bring bedding and towels. Other costs: \$5 per adult; \$2.50 per child.

A folder outlining the summer series of seminars at Heathcote is available. Write for a supply to interest your friends.

Future Seminars

The May 27-28 weekend seminar will probe the economic arrangements and political structure consistent with freedom, order and peace. An outstanding group of leaders is available (see program on page 4).

Attendants are sought among

Earthworm Pits

How are you doing with your earthworm culture? It seems that a good many readers have been growing earthworms for some time, have now begun, or are anticipating doing so since our series from Dr. Barrett's book started in *Green Revolution*. Some have reported that culturing the worms in outdoor compost heaps or earth heaps is a satisfactory and labor-saving method.

A well-known user of the pit method is Miss Bernice Warner, Fox and Warner Lanes, Worthington, Ohio. Since 1938 she has been raising them commercially and has air-shipped them all over the world (Japan, Africa, Alaska, etc.). She digs a hole (in the shade) 4 ft. x 4 ft. x 2 ft. deep, and builds it two feet above ground by boards or bales of hay. Into this pit (now 4 ft. deep) she puts 6 in. of vegetable waste (old hay, grass clippings, weeds, corn stalks, garbage, etc.) and 2 in. of (preferably cow) manure and a 2 in. layer of clay dirt. She repeats these layers to the top.

In one corner she buries the earthworms. They rapidly eat their way through the pit, turning it all into valuable humus, which Miss Warner calls "Earthgold." Then more of the material must be added. She has begun worm cultures in February and had "Earthgold" to use in April.

She reports roses infested with blackspot have become lush and healthy with "Earthgold"; her carrots have three times as much vitamin A as carrots not raised organically; and a 900 sq. ft. strawberry bed has for nine years produced from 66 to 160 quarts a year (depending on rainfall).

Miss Warner sells earthworms at 1c each, or, in an earth-culture, by the bushel.

active pacifist, civil rights and inter-racial workers, so that this search may be extended to their members. Send \$2 registration for this weekend and an indication of your position (in an organization), if any, promptly to the Director, Heathcote Center, Freeland, Md. Additional costs for this weekend are \$10 per adult.

The June 24-25 seminar will deal with late findings in nutrition—the Why and How of Raw Foods; the Why and How of Adequate Nutrition; How to Read Your Symptoms and Rate Your Health; Developing a Program of What to Do for Each Attendant to Improve Health. We hope to have Mrs. Ruth Rosevear, nutritionist at Beechwood Clinic (Columbus, O.) as the leader of this important weekend. Registration \$2; other costs \$7.50.

On July 22-23, Dorothy and Will Samuel of Baltimore will assist high-schoolers and early college age youth in opening up problems regarding jobs, education, military service, marriage, etc. Registration \$2; costs \$5.

From Aug. 12 to 20 we will have the big Family Camping Week and School of Living Annual Workshop, Workbee and Annual Meeting. Plan on it now.

Questions, Answers On Heathcote

Each month we'll try to answer questions sent in about the new School of Living Center, Freeland, Md.—Editor

What will members of the Heathcote Center Community do to support themselves? Is it located near a city or university town where people could conceivably work part- or full-time? Or will the community as a whole embark on some income-producing projects? — Lorraine Calhoun, Miami, Fla.

The answers to how to support a family at Heathcote will be as varied as the ingenuity of persons. Some will be retired people, living on pensions; some will produce craft items or mail order service; some will work in nearby cities. York, Pa., is 25 miles (one Heathcoter is now a librarian in York schools); Baltimore is 35; and an industrial park is developing 15 miles away. And yes, let's say it is near a "university," i.e., the School of Living. Why not?

The community can become what members choose to develop. Some families will earn a cash income in book sales, publishing and other School of Living activities. W. B. Anacker hopes to earn his living by recreational use of his acres. Heathcote community members can likely develop some income-producing projects on the land—mushrooms, strawberries, asparagus, grapes or other specialty produce. On a really functioning homestead, remember, the need for cash income is much less than in a city setting.

Q. Will the \$1000 for a living site be a loan? A donation? Will it be refundable or transferable if a family moves? — Ellen Cohen, 246 E. 94th St., New York City.

A. The \$1000 is essentially a family's payment for its two acres. In this case it pays for access to or use of land. It helps the School of Living "pay" an "owner" to obtain it. Then we introduce a new concept — i.e., (continued on page 4)

Nature Is Part of Our Humanity; We Pay A Tribute To Henry Beston

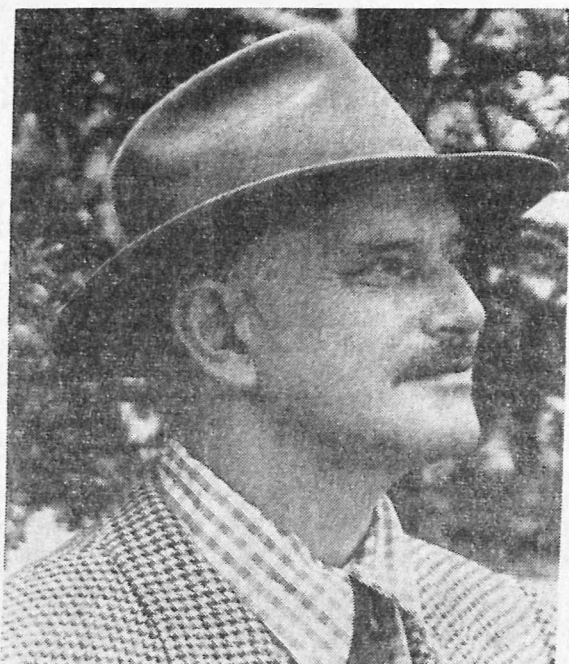
America and the entire world have been blessed by the naturalists Henry David Thoreau and Henry Beston, surprisingly alike in several ways. Both are sons of Massachusetts, Thoreau near Concord and Beston, Cape Cod. Both chose to live much alone, watching, working with and reflecting on their natural habitat. Thoreau built his house in 1845 and lived for 18 months with the work of his hands by Walden Pond. and Beston built an "outermost" house in 1927 atop a sand dune, half the way south on Eastham bar. He went for 12 months, stayed for several years.

Thoreau's *Walden*, first published in 1854, has appeared in many editions and is now in paperback. Beston's account of his life on the beach, *The Outermost House*, first published in 1928, has also seen several printings and it also recently came out in paperback.

Both books are musts for green revolutionaries; both are tied to enduring values; both say essentially that "man ceases to be man without some awareness and experience of that divine mystery, nature." In the foreword to the 1966 *Outermost House*, Beston says, "When the Pleiades and the wind in the grass are no longer a part of the human spirit . . . man becomes as it were, a kind of cosmic outlaw. . . . Man can be either less than man or more than man, and both are monsters." We rejoice that this book has sold more than 600,000 copies and has been translated into French and German.

Creation Still Going On

Significantly, the best of Thoreau's and Beston's books came



Henry Beston — on left, 1964, on right, 1944

out of a year's living with nature alone. Perhaps we best experience the beauty and mystery of this earth in isolation. How much poorer the world if either Beston or Thoreau had lacked the courage to live alone! As Beston watched "land birds, moor birds, marsh birds and beach birds, coastal birds and birds of the outer ocean," he discovered a need for "a wiser and perhaps more mystical concept of animals." But he also discovered that it is no wiser to be too much alone than it is to be always in a crowd. In 1930, he married Elizabeth Coatsworth. They later moved to a farm in Maine, where they still live.

When asked "What is the great truth you have learned from nature?" Beston replies: "I would answer that one's first appreciation is a sense that the creation is still going on, that the creative forces are as great and as active today as they have ever been, and that tomorrow's morning will be as heroic as any of the world. Creation is here and now. prehension as science. It is as impossible to live without rev-

Poetry is as necessary to commerce as it is without joy."

Henry Beston was born in 1888 in Quincy, Mass., of French parents of military and Bonapartist heritage. He received degrees from Harvard, was a teacher and served in both the army and navy in the first world war. He published his first book in 1919. In 1927-28 came the significant year on the Cape; then his marriage; and later his family of two daughters.

If queried on how he accounts for the revival of his book, Beston says, "The interest in nature is growing. People see that today's technological world is an impossible one and they have to have something else."

The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork.

Active in School of Living Affairs

Lynn Stone, 150 W. 82nd, and Ellen Cohen, 246 E. 84th, arranged a meeting in New York City for friends of the School of Living, March 10 at the home of Louis Potter, 19 E. 82nd St. Alice and Harold Ladas helped the group consider and experience new methods for good communication. Discussion of purpose and structure of a New York branch of the School of Living led to plans for future meetings.

Purcell Weaver, 75 Lavuelta, Santa Barbara, and T. J. Frick, Tujunga (Calif.) have been planning a School of Living booth at the rustic fair being held in April by radio station KPFA.

Paul Marks, Box N., Los Banos, is holding a meeting on intentional community at Merced Calif. in April.

Carl and June Ogren, Rt. 3, Paw Paw, Mich. and Eloise Snyder, St. Albans, W. Va., are assisting Mildred Loomis in preparation of an outline for discussion leaders on the subject of homesteading.

Hermine Hurlbut, 2672 N. 34th Court, Miami Fla., has gathered Miami readers into closer association.

Darrel Tarver, a student at San Francisco State College, and Mike McGivern, University of California at Berkeley, have offered to display School of Living literature on their campuses.

Mortgages, Machines and Other Problems of Self-Sufficient Farming

By John Seymour

Part II

To some, our present situation may seem to indicate that we have gone over to "commercial farming." Not really. We have never left sight or practice of our original goal of self-maintenance. Now that we have 70 acres, we are producing more of our own food than we did on our 5 acres in England, and intend to do even more.

But on our little place in England we were renters. I got tired of a traditional English landlord who was always terrified that I was poaching his pheasants. I was. We nearly lived on 'em for eight years. I HAD to buy a piece of land. In England there are few small parcels of land, and prices are much too high.

The Mortgage

So we bought 70 acres in Wales. I had to get a mortgage. I have to pay it off. If I sat 8 hours a day writing, or ran about endlessly for BBC with a camera or tape recorder, I could do this in a few years. But I

don't want to. (Our editor and husband had to work in town in 1940 to pay off their mortgage; I want to avoid this if I can.)

My alternative is to farm this place for cash to make the money to pay off the mortgage, over and above our self-maintenance. Hence the calf-rearing, sheep and beef. What I would love to do more than anything else would be to cut this 70 acres of perfectly beautiful country into say four holdings, and let three other families come here.

But where would I find other homesteaders? The idea seems not to have occurred to any city people, except us, in England or Wales yet. And we have our horrible Town and Country Planning laws which put a penalty on any development of the countryside unless it is by some huge company that wants to put up a factory or an "estate" of jerry-built bungalows. I don't want to be a money-grubbing farmer, and am not going to be. But I've got to pay off that mortgage somehow. (Unfortunately, Henry George's philosophy is not

(continued on page 4)

Herbs and Your Health

By Ben C. Harris
Part III

The purpose of this column is to acquaint the reader with the innumerable uses of weed-like herbs, of old-time plants and other members of the Lawn and Garden Clubs. No longer shall they—not even garden grass—be thoughtlessly maligned and destroyed with a vicious and wasteful ruthlessness. (The only herb I've no use for is Poison Ivy, but remember that some decades ago its extract was employed in the treatment of chronic rheumatism.) Once these botanicals become your friends, you, too, need go no further than your own back yard to discover the "acres of diamonds."

Let's consider the category of serviceable garden flora. No longer will many familiar garden ornamentals and household plants be pampered like spoiled children. They'll serve the non-conformist gardener and herb-minded folk as remedies and dyes, as edibles and seasonings, etc. For example, the yellow-orange flowers of Marigold flavorize rice, potatoes, soups; Nasturtium leaves add zest to a vegetable salad. The fruits of the Flowering Crabapple are used to prepare delicious jams and tasty pickles. Chewing the washed twigs or the bark of the colorful Magnolia tree is considered by many a remedy against the tobacco habit.

Making a sachet? Include the dried, unopened flower buds of your Lilacs and the opening white blooms of Lily of the Valley—plus ground, dried peels of Orange, Lemon and Tangerine.

Let's put our Barberry bushes to better use. True, they make

good hedges that prevent the neighbors' children and stray dogs from trespassing upon your front lawns. How use the various parts of the Barberry?

A cupful of spring-gathered Barberry leaves, once softened in cold water, are added to a cole slaw, vegetable salad or soup, or eaten as is. In the fall the tart red berries become must ingredients in home-made preserves and jellies, an excellent Cranberry substitute. (See the writer's *Eat the Weeds*, p. 71).

(to be continued)

Questions, cont'd

land is a trust (not private property) which can no longer be bought and sold. The whole group will hold the land and supervise its allotment among the families currently and in years to come. If a family moves out after a few years, equity would call for a certain portion of the \$1000 to be deducted as a share for use to date, and the remainder transferred as part of the cost to the incoming family and paid by it to the out-going family.

Q. Are people who become members of Heathcote Community expected to believe and practice special patterns like vegetarianism, macrobiotic diet, single tax, etc. — M. W., Edgartown, Mass.

A. The philosophical base for Heathcote is maximum individual initiative, freedom and self-expression. Hence all personal choices and activities are left to each individual and family, to believe, practice and live as they wish, so long as they do not

physically harm others.

"Single tax" brings up land title and land tenure. The holding of (or title to) land is the one place where all members are involved; land-use is a public matter. How the land is held affects all others. We are trying to practice a pattern where each family has only that amount of land necessary for its livelihood. Our present contract gives each family a 99-year use of a plot (about two acres) for payment of \$1000, as a member of the group (the group or community association retaining the title to the whole 37 acres).

Q. Is indoor sleeping available at Heathcote?—E. C.

A. There are large rooms with some cots and mattresses on third and fourth floors; bedding to be brought from home. To date many a hardy worker or student has stretched his sleeping bag on mattress or floor, and arisen refreshed on the morn. Eventually we hope to have this dormitory space partitioned for privacy and equipped more comfortably. Several outbuildings are clean and available.

Letters, cont'd

trying to raise money to finance our coming volunteer service.

The time is coming ripe for the wide acceptance of School of Living ideas. We were very pleased to read of expansion toward this with the opening of the Heathcote headquarters. Our son, Blaise, whose birth was the big event at Heathcote at the '65 workshop, is happy and healthy as only a naturally raised child can be. He'll be teaching his parents to speak Spanish soon!—Barney & Pat McCaffrey, 807 W. North St., Kalamazoo, Mich. (the forwarding address).

Program At Tolstoy Farm
To the Editor:

We at Tolstoy Farm are attempting to be incorporated as a non-profit landholding trust. We have tentative plans for a study program this summer on rural cooperative living in addition to the usual cabin-building, gardening and other work projects.

I am interested in locating families or couples who plan to be a family to settle near my wife and me, and help create a school and handicrafts business. I have a small leather business started and we need some children, the more the better. I have land for at least one family. We would like to hear from anyone who knows of an unwanted baby

Mortgages, Machines, cont'd

yet the official policy of this country; if it were, I could use this land with a nominal rent each year to the county, without this big burden of cost and mortgage.) In the meantime I am turning this 70 acre wilderness into a productive piece of land (with government help I have to admit) and getting from it good food for people in the cities.

A Homesteader's Alternatives

It seems to me a homesteader can do one of two things. He can work at a craft, trade or profession other than farming for his "foreign currency" and the things he has to buy. Or he can work at farming for his "foreign currency" and self-support off his piece of land. I am doing the latter. Foreign currency (i.e., money to trade with the rest of the world), as you must well know, he has got to have. I bet Thoreau had a pair of trousers and I bet he bought them! And I bet there's not a homesteader in the U. S. who does without

trading with the outside completely. Only a person shipwrecked on an island does that. Each homestead must have outside trade—whether it is by pottery, writing, doctoring, selling labor to some factory, or producing vegetables or beef for sale.

Welsh Homesteaders

Most of the people in our hills and valleys are still homesteaders, although they don't use the word. The postman who delivers our mail has 10 acres and milks 6 cows. The roadman, who keeps the roads clean, has 5 acres and 3 cows. His wife milks them and puts the milk on a stand and sells it for a weekly income. A big farmer round about may have a hundred acres and live off the milk and meat he sells from that. Nearly everybody here owns some land. This gives the laborer a dignity that the landless laborer can never have. He can go to the market, lounge about with the other "farmers"; he is a farmer too! But, alas, they have lost the art of being self-sufficient.

The depression, the two wars, rationing, and cheap imported food have killed home production for use. True, yesterday I ran the postmaster's pig in to the slaughterhouse to be killed for him, in my van. (I always kill my own.) True, most of my neighbors brew beer (but with bought malt). Self-sufficiency in food is lamentably gone. I see nothing wrong with the small farmer who produces nearly all he needs from his piece of land and sells the surplus to the rest of the world for "foreign currency." That seems to me the admirable way of life.

Avoid Commercializing

What I want to avoid in my farming is buying too much stuff, too much machinery, too much fertilizer — commercializing it too much, making it a business and not a natural husbandry operation. My ultimate aim is to own my fair share of 20 acres without mortgage, preferably in the neighborhood of other homesteaders, work at my craft of writing (while my wife Sally works at hers of pottery), and produce all our own food with possibly a little surplus to give away or sell. Horse the only power. I'd like to do our cooking on the fine open fireplaces, and scrap the beastly "Aga" with its appetite for expensive coal. Sally wouldn't though, and she does the cooking.

I believe there's a lot of hard thinking and experimenting to do before any satisfactory theory of decentralizing is produced. Let's work at it and keep on communicating and sharing our discoveries.

(to be continued)

Recreation

One February Sunday afternoon
We set out at the very same moment
My neighbor in plane above
I hiking to woods o'er the meadow
His view the distant city
Mine the violet buds
His the motor's roar
Mine the crack of ice where I trod
He sits crouched in cockpit
I swing arms and legs
His enclosed air
Mine moist with fallen leaves
His thoughts I cannot know
Mine mystery of trees, persons, snow
My hour teased me to sing
I only speculate about him

—M. J. L.

EXTRA

February Green Revolutions

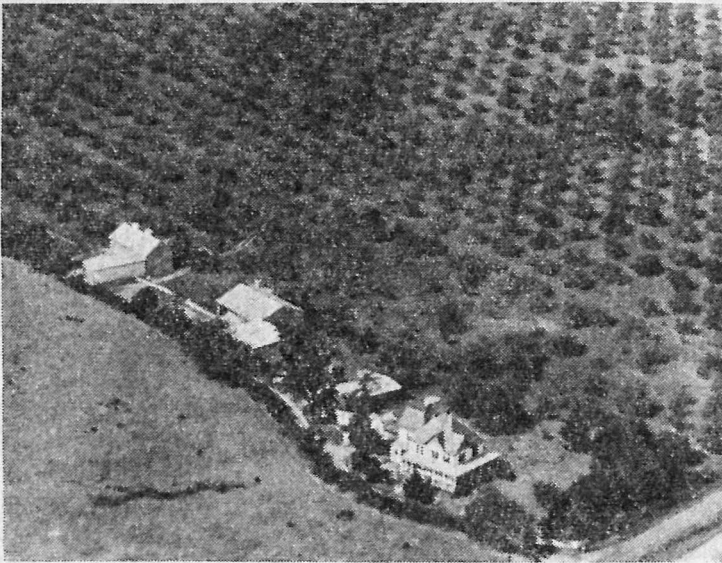
For your use in introducing School of Living to others, for interesting new subscribers, etc.

Order From A Surplus of the February Heathcote Anniversary

Green Revolution
25 copies for \$1

Building Soil With Earthworms

April 22-23, Heathcote Center, Freeland, Md.



Golden Acres Orchards

Don't miss this outstanding seminar-demonstration by A. P. Thompson of the famous organic Golden Acres Orchards, Front Royal, Va. Learn how to grow disease-free fruit and vegetables—no sprays or chemicals. At Golden Acres, 16,000,000 earthworms per acre do the job!

Send \$2 registration fee for this important weekend (with garden workbee) to: Coordinator, Heathcote Center, Heathcote Road, Freeland, Md. (Phone 301-357-5723; by auto, Maryland Line exit on Route 83.)

Basic and Practical Paths to Peace

May 26, 27, 28 at Heathcote Center, Freeland, Md.

Six outstanding leaders: Lewis Herber, author of *Crisis in Our Cities*; Leonard Krimerman, author of *Patterns of Anarchy*; Herbert Roseman, teacher and member of *A Way Out* editorial board; Louis Potter, founder of the Academy of Freedom; Robert Swann, CNVA, Voluntown, Conn., and field worker, International Foundation for Independence; Griscom Morgan, Vale Community, Yellow Springs, Ohio. Mildred J. Loomis, chairman.

Discuss with these leaders: *economic arrangements*—land, money, trade—and *political structure*—how much government for justice, equity and peace?

Send \$2 registration and \$10 for weekend to: Coordinator, Heathcote Center, Freeland, Md. (Phone: 301-357-5723; by auto, Maryland Line exit on Route 83.)

Registration For Seminar On
Basic and Practical Paths to Peace

Saturday May 27, 9 a.m. to Sunday p.m., May 28
(Arrive Friday Night if Possible)

Date _____

Coordinator
School of Living Center
Heathcote Road, Rt. 1
Freeland, Maryland

For the enclosed \$_____ (\$2 per adult) please register the following for the May 27-28 Seminar on *Basic and Practical Paths to Peace*:

Name _____ Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Member of _____ organization _____ position _____

Name _____ Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Member of _____ organization _____ position _____

Please send a full program of this seminar to the following:

Meals and Lodging for Weekend—\$10 per Adult
Bring Bedding and Towels